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4. — *Memoir of the Life of Sir Marc Isambard Brunel, Civil Engineer, Vice-President of the Royal Society, Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, &c., &c., &c.* By RICHARD BEAMISH, F. R. S. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts. 1862. 8vo. pp. xvii. and 359.

MARC ISAMBARD BRUNEL, one of the most distinguished mechanical engineers of this century, was born at Hacqueville in Normandy, on the 25th of April, 1769. At an early age he gave very strong evidence of a taste for mechanical pursuits, and while he was still a mere boy he constructed a quadrant, which was perfect in all its parts, after only a single cursory examination of one. On the breaking out of the French Revolution, his royalist principles rendered his continued residence in France unsafe, and accordingly he came to this country. Here he was naturalized, and spent rather more than five years, principally in the State of New York, engaged in various engineering operations and as an architect, in which latter capacity he superintended the erection of the old Park Theatre in the city of New York. In January, 1799, he embarked for England; and in that country the last fifty years of his life were passed. His death occurred on the 12th of December, 1849. In England he devoted himself with great assiduity to the profession for which his tastes and mental habitudes so admirably qualified him. Shortly after his arrival, he invented, and put into successful operation in the dock-yard at Plymouth, a very ingenious set of machines for the manufacture of ships' blocks, by means of which an immense saving of time and money was effected. At a little later period he invented machinery for the manufacture of army shoes, by which the quality of the work was much improved and a large reduction was made in the cost. He also constructed the government saw-mills at Chatham, and introduced various improvements which showed great mechanical ingenuity and skill. But the work with which his name is chiefly associated is the Thames Tunnel, commenced in 1825, and, after many difficulties and delays and a total suspension of the work during a period of several years, opened to the public in March, 1843. In the prosecution of this work Mr. Beamish was employed by Brunel as an assistant engineer, and he was therefore brought into frequent and intimate relations with the great mechanist. From personal recollections, and from materials furnished by Brunel's family and friends, he has drawn up the very full, and on the whole satisfactory, Memoir now before us. He is not, it is true, a practised writer, and he has not much skill as a biographer; but his thorough knowledge of his subject, and his graphic account of the construction of the Tunnel, to which a

large part of the volume is devoted, render his Memoir a valuable and instructive contribution to mechanical literature. Some abatement, however, must be made from the estimate which he places on the worth of Brunel's services as an engineer, and we have not been able to discover in his Memoir any recognition of the fact that the Tunnel fails to answer the purpose for which it was intended.

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- 5.—*Lectures on Modern History, delivered in Oxford, 1859–61, by* GOLDWIN SMITH, M. A., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. Oxford and London: John Henry and James Parker. 1861. 8vo. pp. 210.

THIS little volume comprises five Lectures delivered at different times by Mr. Smith, in the regular discharge of his duties as Professor of Modern History at Oxford; but, with a single exception, they all have a general connection, and are designed to explain and defend the theory according to which the lecturer purposes to teach history. The first Lecture is the inaugural discourse pronounced by him on assuming the Professorship of Modern History under the revised statutes recently promulgated, and it is mainly devoted to an earnest plea in behalf of historical studies, and to an examination of the relation of history to jurisprudence and political economy. The next two Lectures are "On the Study of History," and contain a very thorough and satisfactory refutation of the doctrines of Comte and his disciples as applied to historical inquiries, together with an elaborate vindication of the doctrine that a philosophy of history is possible. In a Postscript the lecturer offers some very acute and weighty criticisms on the theory maintained by Mr. Mansel in his Bampton Lectures on the Limits of Religious Thought. The fourth Lecture continues the discussion of the subject, and treats of "Some Supposed Consequences of the Doctrine of Historical Progress." The last Lecture, which is the least satisfactory one in the volume, is "On the Foundation of the American Colonies." It presents, indeed, a tolerably good account of the foundation of the various Colonies, and offers some excellent observations on the folly and madness exhibited by the English government during the memorable struggle which ended in the forcible separation of the thirteen Colonies from the mother country; but, considered as a philosophical discussion of this important and suggestive theme, it fails utterly to confirm the favorable anticipations which we had formed from reading the previous Lectures. From some cause, Mr. Smith does not take a broad and firm grasp of his subject, nor does he generalize with much